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Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

Michael Hursh, General Manager

July 23, 2020

Therese McMillan  
Executive Director  
Metropolitan Transportation Commission  
375 Beale St.  
San Francisco, CA 94105

**RE: Blueprint for Plan Bay Area 2050 Commitment Letter**

Dear Ms. McMillan:

The Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District is pleased to reiterate its commitment to the Blueprint project planning process for Plan Bay Area 2050 and appreciates the opportunity to participate in this important process. This Commitment Letter outlines the ways in which AC Transit plans to respond to MTC's concerns about the East Bay Rapid and Transbay Projects.

The MTC Blueprint represents the specific bus, ferry, rail, and road projects to be included in Plan Bay Area 2050. AC Transit submitted several projects to MTC for review under Blueprint, and all but two were carried forward into the Blueprint after initial screening. Cost-benefit concerns were indicated for the East Bay Rapid Project and equity concerns were noted for Transbay service. AC Transit plans to address each of these concerns.

The East Bay Rapid Project was designed to implement portions of AC Transit's 2016 Major Corridors study. To improve the project's cost-benefit, some of the less productive lines can be deferred until their prospects improve, and AC Transit will consider removing the Adeline corridor which has the lowest productivity. The District will also investigate lowering the cost of lines which will remain in the project. To that end, an early value engineering-type review will be conducted. Some amenities may be deferred for later implementation provided that a funding strategy is developed.

We will also address MTC's concerns about equity with regard to the Transbay Service Project. MTC noted that Transbay passengers were generally higher income than other Bay Area transit passengers. AC Transit will analyze and, if feasible, implement additional Transbay lines originating in low-income East Bay neighborhoods. This should attract passengers with lower incomes than existing riders.

To improve fare equity, some transit agencies support means-based fares and coordinated interagency fares in their commitment letters. The AC Transit Board of Directors wishes to join

other Bay Area transit agencies in participating in the Clipper START means-based fare program at the 20% fare reduction level, similar to BART and Caltrain. The Board believes this is a worthwhile effort that will benefit our low-income passengers. However, we remain concerned about the loss of substantial farebox revenue given that AC Transit has the highest proportion of low-income passengers among major Bay Area transit agencies—close to 70%. These concerns are reinforced by the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery periods. The AC Transit Board hopes that priority will be given to identifying a dedicated and sustainable revenue source to make means-based fares a permanent reality.

AC Transit is committed to refining flagged projects and we thank MTC for inclusion of all of the District's submitted projects into the Blueprint. We look forward to our continued partnership with MTC on Plan Bay Area 2050.

Sincerely



Michael A. Hursh  
General Manager

cc: Board of Directors